

VZCZCXYZ0000  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGE #0832 2292128  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 172128Z AUG 06  
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3966  
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0144  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 2172  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0080  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 000832

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/17/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [GY](#)  
SUBJECT: PUSHING FOR POST-ELECTION REFORMS IN GUYANA

REF: A. STATE 114561  
[1](#)B. GEORGETOWN 667  
[1](#)C. GEORGETOWN 710

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Michael D. Thomas  
For Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Chiefs of mission from the US, UK, Canada, EU, UNDP  
IDB, World Bank, and IMF (collectively, the "donors") met  
August 15 to identify and agree on donors' next steps to coax  
the incoming post-election government into implementing  
critical governance reforms.

[1](#)2. (C) The donors agreed on seven key reform priorities

REFORMS IMPACTING THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWER:  
-- Reforming the electoral system to make Parliament  
accountable to the electorate.

REFORMS IMPACTING THE EXERCISE OF POWER:  
-- Reforming GECOM and the technical machinery for elections.  
-- Holding local government elections (last held in 1994 and  
overdue since 1999).  
-- Reforming the media, particularly state-owned media,  
through the design, agreement, and implementation of new  
media legislation.  
-- Reforming the security sector (police, judiciary).  
-- Reforming the public service.  
-- Reforming public finance mechanisms.

[1](#)3. (C) Reform efforts are already underway for items two  
through seven, though many have been side-tracked and need  
reinvigoration. The first item -- forging a connection  
between the electorate and their representatives in the  
National Assembly -- is the linchpin for Guyana's future.  
Currently on election day Guyana's voters choose a party  
knowing who is its candidate for President. But they do not  
know whom they are choosing to represent them in the National  
Assembly. Party headquarters pick and choose their MPs from  
their party lists after finding out how many seats they won.  
Therefore, the members of the National Assembly are  
accountable only to their political parties and not to the  
people. The six critical reforms involving exercise of power  
all depend on Parliamentary action. Some have been stalled  
for over a decade. Without accountability of  
Parliamentarians to the electorate, the people have no way to  
press for the governance reforms they want. Donors are of  
one mind that without changing this perverse Marxist-inspired  
electoral system, Guyana's broader reform and development  
plan is doomed. Guyana can only move forward if its people  
can elect the legislature directly and hold it accountable  
for its actions, or lack thereof.

-----  
NEXT STEP  
-----

14. (C) Donors have reached consensus on the next step -- capitals and international organizations should coordinate their post-election congratulatory messages to the winning presidential candidate (likely to be Bharrat Jagdeo again) to highlight the critical need for renewed efforts on reform programs, most importantly instituting real reforms to the electoral system. Unless Department objects, in coming days Post will work with the donor group to draft points on governance reforms that we will encourage capitals (Washington, London, Ottawa, Brussels) and secretariats (OAS, UN, The Carter Center, the Commonwealth) to draw from when drafting their individual congratulatory messages to the election winner.

15. (C) This next step builds on our successful efforts in early July (in coordination with the UK, Canada, and EU) to get political parties to commit to post-election governance reforms (reftels). The parties made the commitments we wanted them to -- we should remind the winner of his commitment immediately after elections.

Thomas